

Hi everyone – please forward to whoever would be interested (just an informal update)

I'll get more official numbers to you, but just a note. We are having PHENOMENAL nest success out here this year. I forgot to mention this before because of everything going on, but was just talking to Mark about this and wanted to email you right away. But many of our hens are laying 10 eggs, with one that laid 11. All previous years our clutches are 9 eggs. Also, 2nd clutches are usually 6 eggs in previous years, and we had one this year that was 9. They must have had some good food this spring and come out of winter OK. Maybe all that runoff helped out with the vegetation and then insects, even though we have not had a ton of rain (though it rained all last week). The other cool thing is that these broods of 10 chicks are making it at least until we tag them. So things are looking really good this year. We still have a couple hens on nests but most are done. I'll get you actual numbers soon. It's looking like over 60% nest success, but don't quote me on that yet.

I'll get a chick survival estimate to you in the next couple days. Mark and I were just talking about this – when you look at what the range of survival estimates is versus ours, one thing to keep in mind is that some studies are tagging all chicks in a brood, including the one that shows 50% survival. We only tag 2 chicks per brood. Typically you account for this pseudo-replication in survival analyses, but we are just giving you raw counts right now. I'd have to go back and look at those studies to see how they accounted for pseudo replication. But when you're looking at 50% survival, but if 1 chick in a brood survives, likely most of that brood is surviving. Anyways, just something to keep in mind. Also, I will give you conservative estimates of survival. We think we've had some dropped tags, but we can't obviously know for sure. So I'll give you the conservative estimate and then we'll have to go through field notes at a later date to see how many we think were dropped.

Also, as an aside, all indications are that our suturing method is not having an impact on chick survival, from necropsy reports and spotlight counts from last year. In talking with other researchers last week, we are way more careful than most when we tag and monitor chicks and broods. We wear descent spray, gloves to try to avoid leaving scent when we go out to both monitor and tag.

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Exhibit No. 2